



BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
MARINA DIMITRIJEVIC
COUNTY BOARD CHAIRWOMAN

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Contact: Bill Zaferos, Public Information Manager
(414) 278-4230, bill.zaferos@milwcnty.com

COMPROMISE REACHED FOR SPENDING ON
READINESS FOR AFFORDABLE HEALTHCARE ACT
Chairwoman Dimitrijevic, County Executive Abele Agree on a Substitute Resolution for
More Than \$700,000 for Milwaukee County Implementation of ACA

(MILWAUKEE) – Milwaukee County Board Chairwoman Marina Dimitrijevic said today a compromise has been reached with County Executive Chris Abele on a measure to prepare Milwaukee County for outreach on implementation of the federal Affordable Care Act.

Dimitrijevic, who had proposed a resolution for a \$1.1 million outreach plan last week, introduced a compromise substitute resolution at a special meeting of the County Board's Finance, Personnel and Audit Committee meeting Wednesday calling for the expenditure of up to \$729,000 for ACA outreach and readiness this year.

The compromise measure calls for:

- \$130,000 for Winged Victory and to assist people living with mental illness in applying for disability benefits and other entitlements available to them.
- \$99,000 to enhance the Impact 2-1-1 Hotline, a central access point for people in need.
- \$90,000 to "Covering Kids with Families," which will help support healthcare enrollment in targeted minority communities and educate families about ACA. The move will add more counselors to the Community Health Access Program to assist getting clients into Medicaid or private health insurance.
- \$60,000 to the City of Milwaukee Health Department's Community Health Access Program with funding to be matched by the City.
- Authorization to the Department of Health and Human Services to expend any or all of an additional \$350,000 for programs and services that help enroll at-risk members of the community into health insurance programs.

Dimitrijevic said she was glad that she and Abele were able to come to a compromise measure because it was important that the County move forward to get people enrolled.

"I'm thankful and happy to work with the County Executive so that our County can be ready on October 1 as we work to reach 100 percent enrollment," she said. "Milwaukee County needs to be fully prepared for the implementation of the Affordable Care Act with an outreach plan for those who potentially will be uninsured following Gov. Scott Walker's refusal of federal Medicaid funding.

(more)

“About 17,000 residents in Milwaukee County who will be kicked off the state’s BadgerCare low-income health insurance will need assistance with the new healthcare options available to them and about 120,000 County residents will need to enroll in Medicaid or private insurance. They urgently need information before they lose their healthcare benefits at the end of the year. Where are they supposed to turn for help finding health insurance?”

Dimitrijevic said without accurate and timely information these people will become uninsured, putting the health of themselves and their families at risk. She added that without health insurance, many people without information to make informed decisions will resort to emergency room care, causing health costs to rise for those who are already insured.

Funding for the compromise measure would come out of a projected surplus within the Department of Health and Human Service.

“The ACA is the most monumental change in healthcare in this country’s history,” Dimitrijevic said. “If Milwaukee County is not fully prepared for this change, we risk a chaotic situation in which people lose their health insurance coverage with nowhere to turn for information.

“Without proper training for workers, a sufficient number of trained workers, outreach and proper assistance for retention, many people who are eligible for state programs or private insurance will not participate. A health economy starts with healthy people. We need a pro-active plan that seeks to reach 100 percent enrollment in our county.”

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